

5 Mr. LESLEY to the Bishop of SARUM.

My Lord,

OUR Correspondence has been somewhat interrupted of late. I am in Debt for your *Introduction* and *Sermon* upon the 31st of *October*, before *George*. It will be hard to put them together; for they are sweet and bitter out of the same Fountain. The Former sets before us * *The reviving the Fires in Smithfield, and from thence over the whole Nation: The Clergy being turn'd out of their Livings, or forced to abandon their Wives, &c. The Abbey Lands being resum'd: The Inquisition set up: And such a Scene of Cruelty and Barbarity, that you wonder at a Set of Men so impiously corrupted in the Point of Religion, as not to be frighted at all this!* Here your Business was to fright Folks; but in your Sermon we see quite another Spirit: † *For doing to all others what we would have others do to us; loving all Mankind, not only Friends, but even Enemies, forbearing and forgiving them, and praying for them; pitying the Miserable, and relieving the Poor according to their Necessities, and our Abundance; instructing those that oppose themselves in a Spirit of Love, and overcoming Evil with Good; not returning, even to those of the Church of Rome, Persecution for Persecution, doing no Hardship to them, other than what is necessary to secure our selves from falling into their Hands. We know both their Principles, and what their Practices have been, wheresoever they get Power over those they call Hereticks; against which it is but reasonable that we should be on our Guard; and it is to be hoped, that Matters shall never be carried farther against them, whatsoever we, or our Brethren may have suffered at their Hands.*

* *Introd.*

p. 36, 37

&c.

† *Ser. p. 27.*

Thus your Lordship, and, as a *Royal Interpreter*, we are bound to believe you speak the Mind of your Master, who has Measures to keep with the *Papists*, upon other Interests and Views than those of *Great-Britain*; and as he did in his own Country, before he came thither, where he built Churches for them, and a College even for the *Jesuits* at his own Palace in *Hanover*, while the *Reformed* are not suffered to have any Church within the City, or publick Exercise of their Religion; no not while his Mother the Princess *Sophia* liv'd, who was one of them: Which sheweth, that he prefer'd *Rome* to *Geneva*; for *Con* and *Transubstantiation* are not so widely different.

And either may go down, if we must take that Account of our Improvements by the *Revolution*. ‡ *If there is any Difference, say you, between the present State of things, and that we were in above thirty Years ago, it is that we are now more naked and defenseless, more insensible and stupid, and much more deprav'd in all respects than we were then. We are sunk in our Learning, vitiated in Principle, tainted, some with Atheism, others with Superstition; both which, tho' by different Ways, prepare us for Popery. So that the Mischief of Atheism is leading us to Popery! These are strong Lines.*

‡ *Introd.*
p. 28.

But, my Lord, may it not be worth your most serious Enquiry, how the *Revolution* brought this *Atheism* among us? For there is no Effect without a Cause? Give me Leave then to suggest some of these Causes, and they shall be pretty apparent.

1. So many of the *Low Church* Clergy following your Lordship's Steps, and preaching backward against their former Characteristick Doctrine of *Passive Obedience*, which they had for many Years before inculcated into the People more frequently, and with greater Earnestness than any other Christian Doctrine, and none more than your Lordship, of which you have been told so often, that I spare repeating, only for the Refreshment of your Memory; and to save you the Trouble of looking over your voluminous Tracts, I have put a small Collection to this Purpose out of your own Works, as an Appendix to the *Good Old Cause*, which was dedicated to your Lordship's Service.

Now what could those poor People think, who had taken their Religion upon the Authority of their Teachers, but that all the rest of the Christian Doctrines were as false as this, which they saw recanted, and as little believed by these Preachers themselves? And how far this might be a Snare to lead Men into *Atheism*, I leave your Lordship to judge.

2. The new Oaths impos'd in flat Contradiction to those lawful Oaths taken before, and administred in vain; for a lawful Oath is not dissolv'd by any After-Oath which is contrary to it; but the After-Oath is sinful. And no Oath can discharge a Man from his Duty to God, and his Laws; for a Man cannot oblige himself to sin. Therefore it is a Rule agreed upon by all, that an unlawful Oath binds to nothing but Repentance, and it would be a Sin to keep it, as it was in *Herod*, who for his Oath's sake beheaded *John the Baptist*.

I believe there are none, even of common Swearers, who would take solemn Oaths for nothing: Therefore the new Oaths were made a Qualification for Places of Profit and Power. But there is no Stop in Wickedness: At last came the *Abjuration*! And because they knew it would go terribly against the Grain with very many, Dr. *Stillingfleet* Bishop of *Worcester*, and others of the complying Divines, having wrote against it, while it was in forming, and generally all of them having express'd their utmost Detestation of it: And having seen, by the Example of the most worthy Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Dr. *Sancroft*, and

near Half the Bishops at the *Revolution*, with several Hundreds of the inferior *Clergy*, and many of the *Lainy*, Men of Quality and Honour, who chose rather to quit their Places, than burthen their Consciences; therefore they put a Clause in the *Abjuration*, obliging every Man that took it, to swear that he did it *willingly and freely*: And since losing their Places would not persuade Men, they made the Penalty of refusing it a *Premunire*; which is stripping Men of all they have in the World, divesting them of all Property in any thing, even to the Cloaths upon their Backs, or a Bit of Meat, if any should give it them, and Imprisonment for Life in this Condition; and that none might escape, any two Justices of the Peace were empower'd to tender this Oath to whom they pleased, Man or Woman, above the Age of Sixteen, and the Refusal to be *Premunire*. I know it was said, that this was only *in Terrorem*, and was never put in Execution to this Day, like the Sanguinary Laws against the Papists in Queen *Elizabeth's* Time, by which none of them suffer'd from that time to this, except two or three in the *Whigg* Fury of the *Popish Plot*. We see then what it is to have the Execution of the Laws put into *Whigg Hands*, who have now issued a Proclamation signed *George R.* to revive these Laws, and commanding them to be put in Execution to the utmost Extremity; having first purg'd the Commissions of the Peace throughout the Kingdom, of all who were suspected of Moderation, or any Favour towards the Church: And in the Hands of these Justices it is now put, to exterminate all tender Consciences in *England*, above Sixteen Years of Age; and they are requir'd to give an Account of their Proceedings herein to *K. George* and his Council, that every one may go before another in shewing their Zeal to their new *K.* since they know what will please him.

But if the Reason given in this Proclamation, for this unexampled Severity, be true, *viz.* That these Men have rais'd that general Disgust which has appeared throughout the Nation, against their new *Redeemer*: I say, if this be true, it might have a quite different Effect from what he proposes; for if these Men have such a universal Possession of the Affections of the People every where, it is likely the People of *England* will not be better pleas'd to see their best Friends so cruelly *persecuted*, and all devoted to Destruction. They did not use so to be gain'd. Was this for being disappointed of that Draught of Blood expected at *Bristol*, and other Places? Most Governments begin with Acts of Clemency; but here the Word is Blood and Desolation; and *They who love not my Government shall feel it*. The Lord rebuke this Spirit of Persecution that is gone forth, and make a Way for these poor People to escape, whom he has already devoured in his Intentions. Was your *Sermon of Moderation and Christian Charity* meant as a Preludium to this? Will not Men say, *When the Fox begins to preach*-----

But now, my Lord, let me speak to your Conscience, in the Presence of the Great God, before whom you and I, according to the Course of Nature, must soon give an Account; you have sworn, that he who now takes the Stile of *James III.* has no manner of Right whatsoever to the Crown. There are several Sorts of Right, according to the Constitution of different Countries: The Emperor and King of *Poland* have the Right of *Election*; but in Hereditary Governments the Right is in *Proximity of Blood*. And you cannot say that *James III.* has not this Right, unless you were sure that he was not born of the Queen; so sure as to take your Oath of it. Nay, my Lord, I must tell you, that you are sure of the contrary, by what you your self deliver'd so convincingly in your Thanksgiving Sermon at *Salisbury*, *viz.* *That by the Law of God, and the whole Earth, a Child own'd by both Parents is to be taken as such, unless evident Proof be made to the contrary*. Therefore you said, that you laid no Stress upon the Birth of the Prince of *Wales*, but that there was an Act of Parliament against him, and so you go wholly upon what you call *Parliamentary Right*. Whether you had that truly, or not; or, if you had, whether it would supersede his Hereditary Right, we shall see presently; but in the mean time you allow he has the Hereditary Right: How then can you swear, that he has no manner of Right whatsoever? for this was put into the *Oath of Abjuration*, to bar all Sorts of Right, of one kind or other.

And now for your *Parliamentary Right*. If the Prince of *Orange* was no legal King, then that Parliament was no legal Parliament. And when you can make out the Legality of that Convention which made him King, and their Right to dispose of the Crown, I dare engage for *James III.* (I know his Justice so well) that he will be no more a Pretender, or give you farther Trouble. But he thinks he has the Hereditary Right, which you likewise own, and have *Abjur'd*.

And all the Pretence now, is *Religion*. But, my Lord, let us be in earnest in this Matter: Does your Lordship really believe that *Dominion is founded in Grace*? Did not Christ and his Apostles command Obedience to Heathen Governours, and that for Conscience sake, as being the Ordinance of God? And will you exclude your lawful King, because he is a Christian of a different Denomination? But why is this made an Objection against him, more than against his Father? It was reckon'd no Bar against his Succession. There was an Experiment indeed made by the *Bill of Exclusion*, but it was rejected in Parliament, as being contrary to the Laws, and a total Subversion of the Constitution. This determin'd the Matter, so that there was not the least Scruple made upon his Accession, no, not by any Man in *Britain*: Neither did the Prince of *Orange*, or his Convention, even when they were resolv'd to *Abdicate* the King, object his Religion as an Incapacity in him to hold the Crown. What then has alter'd the Case as to his Son? Was it
a greater.

a greater Crime in him to be driven, when an Infant, into a Popish Country to be educated there, than in his Father to quit the Communion of the Church of *England*, wherein he had been educated, and to embrace that of *Rome*, which the Church calls *Apostacy*, and is made Treason by the Law, 13 *Eliz.*? Or will you lay upon him the Male-Administrations charg'd upon his Father, before he was born? Your Cause is naked indeed, when you cannot name any one Reason for your excluding this Prince, the most accomplished of his Age in *Europe*, unless it be for that Reason, and that *the worse Title, the better King*.

But if Religion is the only Objection against him, why have you excluded him tho' he should become a Protestant? Do you think there cannot be a true Convert from Popery? Then surely the Truth must be on that Side. And you must begin your History of the Reformation again, and you may make it much shorter, and tell the World, that the Whole of the Matter is, These Reformers were all a Parcel of Hypocrites, and meer Papists in their Hearts; for were they not so bred?

But tho' the Prince you persecute was bred a Papist, yet I can tell you, my Lord, he is no Bigot; he is not the *Deaf Adder* you so respectfully mention; he will not refuse, in due time and place, to hear what you have to say upon the Point of Religion: This he has promis'd, and sent it under his own Hand, where you might have seen it, I doubt not but you have heard of it. But what Opportunity has been offer'd him, where with Safety and Honour he might do this? What Arguments have you offer'd, except the *Baculum*, to rob him of his Undoubted Right and Inheritance; to attain him, and set a Price upon his Head, much greater than that for which our Saviour was betray'd? And all this without any Crime or Offence given by him! Such Innocence was never so persecuted, so oppress'd, except only in the Case of our Blessed Lord. He may say as to the World, *Which of you convinceth me of Sin?* But notwithstanding his wicked Citizens hated him, and sent a Message after him, when he was gone into a far Country, saying, *We will not have this Man to Reign over us.* And why? *Because he is the Heir, therefore let us Kill him, and the Inheritance shall be Ours;* That is, the People's, to pull down, and set up Kings at their Pleasure, without being oblig'd to give any other Reason but, *We are they that ought to speak, who is Lord over us?*

And now do you wonder at the Increase of *Atheism* since the Revolution? And the *Superstition* which you join with it, is of those unreasonable Men, who desire not to remove the ancient Land-marks, but to keep within the Laws and Constitution which they receiv'd from their Fathers, and enjoyn'd by their Authority upon their Posterities, who have farther bound themselves by their own Oaths, who think not the Voice of the People, that is of every prevailing Party, to be the Voice of God, for that it was *the Voices of the People which prevail'd* to prefer a Murderer to their Saviour, and therefore they dare not trust to it in excluding their Lawful King. These *Rechabites*, who have Respect to their Fathers, to their Laws, and the Constitution left by them, and cannot give in to every Revolution, which overturns the Old Foundations; these are the superstitious who stand in your Lordship's Way, and who by their Stiffness in this, are, you say, leading us to Popery.

But to what Part of Popery? Is it to the Deposing Doctrine? Which Power Dr. Burnet, late Professor of Divinity at *Glasgow*, thinks better trusted in the Hands of the Pope, than of the People. Read his Words in his *Vindication of the Church and State of Scotland*, Printed at *Glasgow* 1673. where p. 68, 69. he says, *Less Disorders may be apprehended from the Pretensions of the Roman Bishops, than from those Maxims that put the Power of Judging and Controuling the Magistrate in the People's Hands, which opens a Door to endless Confusions, and indeed sets every private Person upon the Throne, and introduceth an Anarchy which will never admit of Order, or Remedy: Whereas those who have but one Pretender over them, could more easily deal with him, and more vigorously resist him.* Nay, he makes the Power of the People to be a Popish Doctrine, as he says in his excellent Sermon upon the 30th of *January*, 1680, p. 15. thus. *The resolving of all Power in the People was first taken up by the Asserters of the Pope's Deposing Power; for they argued, that if it belonged to the People, then the Pope representing the Universal Church, all their Right did accrue to him, so that in their Names he was to dispose of Crowns as he pleas'd.* I am not concerned to reconcile the Bishop and the Doctor; but here the Revolution is made to be entirely Popish, unless railing at the Word *Popery*, and embracing its Principles, may be call'd a Reformation!

Do not you charge the Papists with the Principle to do every thing for the Good of Mother Church, which otherwise it would not be lawful to do; to lye, swear and forswear, to cheat, equivocate, murder, and rebel, and ruin whole Nations, to betray Father and Mother, or any thing more monstrous, all is sanctify'd by the good End propos'd to advance Religion! And is not this a brief History of the Revolution? Is it strange then that *Atheism* should come in with it? Name any one Wickedness the Papists are charg'd with to have acted for their Church, and can you say that the like has not been done in the Revolution, on pretence of preserving the Protestant Religion? And if common Truth and Honesty is not to be found in any Church, is not this the High-way to *Atheism*? And you call those superstitious, and of slavish narrow Spirits who boggle at any of these things, to carry on the *good Old Cause*! Will you ever again call the Holy League in *France* a Rebellion, or the solemn League and Covenant? For both pretended the Purity of Religion! To believe

believe no God, or to live loose and dissolutely as if there were none, is not half so monstrous, nor has those Aggravations, as to father all our Wickedness upon God, and sanctify it with the Name of Religion! A meek Murder! A Godly Rebellion! Saying Grace to a Rape! And begging a Blessing upon Perjury and Hypocrisy! Such, my Lord, is the pathetic Part at the End of your Sermon of loving even Enemies, returning no Injury, but overcoming Evil with Good, &c. If you make not out the Justice and Legality of the Revolution for which you plead.

And you give no other Reasons for it, but the strange Providences which attended it, as the changing of the Wind, &c. to favour your Designs, that the Prince of *Orange*, no, nor the Elector of *Brunswick* neither, was drown'd going into *England*, and the like, which make up the Bulk of your Sermon, and is a Diary of these sort of wonderful Providences. But there never was a prosperous Wickedness, which had not many of these Providences to reckon, else it had not been Prosperous. This was the constant Theme of the 41 Whiggs: Every Victory over the King was a sure Demonstration that they fought the Lord's Battles, and that theirs was his own Cause! Will your Lordship say, That Success always attends Justice in this World? This would give *Mahometism* the better of *Christianity*. Why then did you entertain your new King with such wretched Stuff? But he did not understand you. And they who did, knew there was nothing better to be said for the Revolution, or his Title to the Crown. If you had had any better, I suppose you would have given it him.

Think not, my Lord, that I deny Providence here. No, far from it, I believe a Sparrow does not fall to the Ground without the Providence of God. And no Man who has taken an Account of his own Life, but must have observ'd many Providences relating to his particular Concern, of which he ought to take notice, and be thankful for the Mercies receiv'd. But this is no Proof to other Men, and God has not founded Government (wherein all are concern'd) upon such Observations as these, but fix'd it upon positive Rules and Precepts, which are obligatory to all. And these Precepts are not to be over-ru'd by Providences, which Men often mistake, and apply them to the very contrary of that for which they were intended. How many times has the general Dissatisfaction taken against the late King *James*, and the Unanimity with which the Prince of *Orange* was receiv'd as a Deliverer, and the seeming earnest Concern for the Succession of the House of *Hanover*, that it must be brought in to every Address, tho' by Head and Tail; I say, how has this been urged as such a Providence of God, that no doubt could be made but that he was well pleas'd with the Revolution, and with this Succession? but now see another Providence; that as soon as this long desir'd House came into *England*, even upon the Bloody Coronation Day, such a general Disgust and Contempt of the new King appeared all over the Nation, that History, perhaps, cannot afford such another Instance. And whether the Method of Severity now taken, and most agreeable to the Despotick Government he has us'd in his own Country, will mend or marr the Matter, Time must shew. Suppose now, my Lord, one should improve this into a Providence that God has turn'd the Hearts of the People back again to their old Constitution and Royal Family, having at last seen how grossly they have been impos'd upon, their Sin being Pointed out by Providence, in their Punishment; for there is not so notorious an Instance any where to be found as that which has been chosen, to bring to our Minds the impious Slanders upon the most virtuous Queen, and the pretended Suspicions of the Legitimacy of the Prince of *Wales*, *James* the III. There is another Providence which has brought the *Hanoverian Tories* to their Senses again, who promis'd themselves all Security to the Church in that Succession; and that her Friends would be chiefly employed in the Administration. And the new King has Reason to blame his Credulity in believing the Whiggs, that they are the Weight of the Nation, and that they had render'd the Church so contemptible, that no Danger was to be apprehended from that Side. But the Resentment of the People has shew'd itself more openly and universally than in the time of the late King *James*, before the Prince of *Orange* Landed with an Army to set them at Work: But they act now like Men in Despair, fearless of Danger, giving all for lost, and if they cannot rescue the Church, resolv'd to perish with her. And this at a time when it is reckon'd Crime enough to turn any Man out, even of the Army, who is suspected to have kind Wishes towards her, or that he was employed by the late Queen, who was a Nursing Mother to her; for which an *Inquisition* is now set up at *White-Hall*; and the *Dutch Gazettes* call the Arch-bishop of *Canterbury*, Your Lordship, and others join'd with him, Presbyterian Prelates. We may take sure Indexes from those who are the best Allies. In short, as to the Church of *England*, *Omnia pessum eunt*; she is declar'd an Enemy, when all are counted such who are Friends to her, and for that Reason. And it is too late to mend; the Fault is committed; the Hearts of the People are lost to King *George*, and he must stand or fall with the Whigg Interest, which he has espous'd. And when he finds, as find he must, that they are an inconsiderable, tho' noisy Part of the Nation, and will not be able to support him, and he far from Home, it is enough to turn his Head. It would make a Man mad to see himself so wheedl'd, so betray'd, that instead of a King, he already is become the Jest, the Contempt and Aversion of the Nation, while they have in their Eye a Native of their own, with Heart entirely *English*, who only has the Right, and against whom there is no Objection can be put by any reasonable Man. And he only can restore their Constitution and their Laws, and give Peace and Security to *Britain*, I may say, to *Europe*. And I would desire no more on his Behalf, than that the worst of his Enemies should see and converse with him.

Pray, my Lord, let me ask you one Question; did you really believe this Prince to be born of the Queen, when you officiated in the Chapel Royal of the Princess at the *Hague*, and pray'd for him as Prince of *Wales*, in the Solemn Offices of the Church? If you did, what new Discoveries had you upon the Water in crossing the Ferry

Ferry from thence to *Exeter*, where you forbid his being mentioned in the publick Prayers? did the Prince of *Orange* believe it when he sent Myn Heer *Zulestein* to *England*, to congratulate his Birth? But if neither of you did believe it all this while, what a Scene of Hypocrisy and Villainy was here Acted? Not only to deceive the World, but to mock God, in offering solemn Prayers to him for what you thought an Impostor, and where the Words of your Mouth, and the Thoughts of your Heart were in direct Opposition to each other, when the one said Bless, the other meant Curse! With what Face then could you so gravely reprehend those of the Clergy, whom you suppos'd to pray one way, and look another? This is in your Printed Speech before the House of Lords, and there you charge this as one main Cause of the Impiety and Infidelity (say you) now spread throughout the Nation. But who led the Way? Who did it first? And who now complains of Revolution-Atheism? And I will tell you, my Lord, that Air of Meekness and Piety which you put on in doing this, makes the Spectre tenfold more deformed. Nothing will bear the Weight of those Solemn Words you take in your Mouth upon these Occasions, but evident Truths, built upon sure and solid Principles. Therefore, my Lord, not only for your own Vindication, but in Charity to many others, of which Number I am one, who desire Information, you are oblig'd to prove this Position, which is the Point at present, *viz.*

That a King may justly be excluded from his Throne on Account of Religion.

This must be proved from the Laws of Christ, and the municipal Laws of *Britain*, to satisfy the Conscience of the Subjects. And when you have done this, you will greatly deserve of the Publick, of many deceived Persons, and of Me in Particular.

I give your Lordship Caution, that in your Discussion of this Point, you give no Offence to your Brethren the Presbyterians, who have in their Confession of Faith, C. 23. concerning the Civil Magistrate, That Difference in Religion, even Infidelity, does not take away the Right of the Magistrate.

But if your Lordship will not maintain the Position (as I am apt to believe you will not) then it remains that you assign some other Cause for excluding this Prince from his Inheritance. And if you can Assign no other Cause, then you must confess that the Injustice you have done to him is very apparent.

Suppose a Prince should by Violence, and contrary to Law, take away the Right and Inheritance of his Subjects on Account of Religion, would it not be thought Tyranny and Oppression in him? And is it nothing in Subjects to take away the Right of Inheritance of their King upon the same Account? Is the Law a Rule to the King, and none to the Subjects? Has every Body Liberty and Property, and a Right of Inheritance, but the King? All the Lands in *Britain* are held of the Cown, and forfeitable to it, as the only Fountain of Property: And can he who gives Right to others, have none himself? Cannot the King take away the Right of the Subject, but according to Law? And can the Subject dispose of the Crown it self contrary to all Law? The Law says, *The King can do no wrong*; but is this true only of the Subjects, they can do no wrong to their King? Your Lordship heard the late Duke of *Leeds*, upon the Tryal of Dr. *Sacheverell*, declare in the House of Lords, that the Revolution was Resistance and Rebellion, and that if they had not succeeded, every Man concern'd in it, and himself with the rest, had forfeited Life and Estate by the Law; and he appeal'd to the Judges there present. And can the Law justify the Revolution and condemn it? Yes,

As when the Sea breaks o'er its Bounds,

And overflows the level Grounds;

Those Banks and Damms, that like a Skreen,

Did keep it out, now keep it in:

So when Tyrannical Usurpation

Invades the Freedom of a Nation,

The Laws of th' Land that were intended

To keep it out, are made defend it.

And is this a total Subversion of the Constitution? Which your Lordship gives as the only Case wherein Subjects may rebel, and whereby you do justify the Revolution against the late King *James*.

But suppose he has abdicated, as you would have; that is, voluntarily and freely relinquish'd the Government, this would have made no Vacancy in the Throne; for by the Law and the Constitution, the next Heir had immediately succeeded. There can be no *Inter-regnum* in an Hereditary Monarchy, where the King never dies. But from the time that the Convention voted the Throne to be vacant, till they fill'd it with the Prince of *Orange*, you will not say, but there was a plain *Inter-regnum*, which was a total Subversion of the Constitution: And so they understood it, for they thought not themselves bound by any Law, they enquir'd not for the next Heir, nor who he was, but as being again resolv'd into what they call the *Original and Independent State of Nature*, they imagin'd themselves at Liberty to set up what sort of Government they pleas'd, and I believe your Lordship will not deny that they might have turn'd *England* into a Common-Wealth (as their Pedecessors did in 1649, and said in the Act they made for it, that it was no Breach of the Constitution) they might have set up an *Aristocracy*, *Democracy*, or what they would, or fill'd the Throne with any of themselves, with any *Turk*, *Saracen*, or *Jew*, as well as with the Prince of *Orange*, and the one would have been no more a Breach of the Constitution than the other. Would it not be a total Subversion of the Constitution of Heaven and Earth, as they stand at present, if they were reduced again to their Original *Chaos*? The *Chaos* in the Case of Government is that senseless Notion, and contrary to the History of the Creation in *Genesis*, of an Independent State of Nature, and the Original

Contract suppos'd to be made by the People upon their first Erection of Government. This is the Foundation of the pretended Power of the People over their Governours, and to alter and change Governments for their own Advantage. And this is the whole Authority of the Convention, who pleaded this Original Contract, which they said the late King *James* had broken. It is a pity they did not produce it! But I heard one say, That Tory Rogue Dr. *Brady* stole it when he was Keeper of the Records in the *Tower*. From whence he has prov'd that our new Constitution of the House of Commons in Parliament was not known in *England* till the 49. of *Hen. 3.* But bringing us back to the supposed State of Nature, and Power of the People, an Original Contract is a total Subversion of all After-Constitutions, and leaves us in the same Freedom they suppose Mankind was at first, to cook and order Government as they think fit, without any previous Obligations upon them.

Now I leave it to your Lordship, who is much vers'd in Manuscripts, to find out whether Religion, and what Religion was made a Condition of Government in the Original Contract; for you will find it no where else.

I know your Lordship loves to look abroad in the World, to consider the State of things, and the general Sentiments of Mankind, and blame those who confine their Thoughts to a little Party-Strife in a Corner of *Europe*. I am told that the *Great Mogul* is a *Mahometan*, but the Generality of his Subjects are *Gentiles*. That the greatest Number of the Subjects in *Turkey* are Christians. That the King of *Prussia* is a *Calvinist*, but his Dominions generally *Lutheran*. The Duke of *Saxony*, now King of *Poland*, is a Convert Papist; but the Country of *Saxony* is Protestant, as is the *Palatinate*, tho' the Elector is a Papist. And a great, if not the greatest Part of the Subjects of the *States General*, especially since their new Acquisitions, are Papists.

Now, my Lord, if Religion be a Barr to Government, what a Confusion will this bring into the World? What Government, or what Subjects will be safe? And you see this is not the common Sentiment of Mankind.

I think this Point need not be labour'd any further. But tho' it is plain by the Laws of God and of the whole Earth, and particularly of *Great Britain*, that the Religion of King *James III.* is no Barr to his Right of Government, yet it may not be unacceptable to your Lordship to let you know what he has done already for the Security of the Church of *England*. In his Instructions, bearing Date *March 3. 1701--2.* under his Hand and Signet Royal (and I can take my Oath I saw him sign it, for I desir'd it) he gives up the Regale (of which your Lordship has wrote an excellent History, shewing it to have been the great Corruption of the Church) as to the Nomination of Bishops, Deans, and all other Ecclesiastical Preferments in the Gift of the Crown. That the Archbishop of *Canterbury* for the time being, and four other Bishops to be appointed, shall, upon each Vacancy, name three Persons to his Majesty, of which Number he shall take one. And that the Church of *England*, by Law Establish'd, shall be continued in the sole Possession of all her Churches, Universities, and even Schools. And moreover, as a particular Mark of his Favour and Bounty to her, he remitted the Tithes and First-Fruits, payable by the Bishops and Clergy to the Crown. Which his Sister knowing, she did it afterwards, and receiv'd Addresses of Thanks for it from all Parts of the Nation, which indeed were justly due to him, who had done it before she came to the Crown. If you say, he was under Age, you see at least what the Queen his Mother, who then had the Government of him, was willing he should do in Favour of the Church of *England*. But he has since confirm'd these same Instructions, and promis'd to make them good in his Letter bearing Date the 2d of *May, 1711.* wrote all with his own Hand, and now lying in *London*, which your Lordship may see, and have Copies, if you desire it.

And he has done this the more willingly, and will do every thing else that can be devis'd for the Security of the Church of *England*, because he is well satisfied of her Principles as to Government, and that if he were upon the Throne, she must be his chief Support under Heaven, as her Security lies in preserving the Monarchy according to the Constitution, which her own Experience has made good; for as he well expresses it in that Letter, *The Crown was never struck at, but she also felt the Blow.* And as this is their Joint-Interest, so your Lordship is sensible that it would be no ways in his Power to renew the *Marian* Persecution, when the Reformation was but young, and the Popish Interest so much Superior in *England*: But to attempt it now, when that Interest is sunk, at Mercy, and under Sanguinary Laws, would be Madness, and end in nothing but their utter Extirpation, and the Danger is more on their Side than on ours. Therefore the *Raw Head* and *Bloody Bones* of Queen *Mary's* Reign, which you set forth with so much furious Rhetorick, can frighten none but Children. But there is a Power now growing strong, which has made *Root and Branch-Work* with the Church of *England* long since Queen *Mary's* time; and if your Lordship's Concern had been for the Church, you would have given her some Notice of her Enemies on that Side, who have shed more of her Blood a thousand times told, than ever Queen *Mary* did, and much more, even upon Scaffolds, of the Clergy, Nobility and Gentry. To divert us from this, you amuse us with Danger from those in whose Power it is not to hurt us, and the least Attempt of it would be Ruin to themselves. But, my Lord, the People of *England* have seen this, and shewn their Resolution not to suffer the Church to be worried over again by the same Hands. And you may as well stop the Tide at *Gravesend* with your Thumb,

as oppose the Torrent of the Inclinations of the People, now their Eyes are open'd. Your House is on Fire, and it breaks out in several Parts; and if your Severities (the only way left, for they will be wheedl'd no more) shall force the People to their own Defence, you may accompany your King back again to *Hanover*, if you get Leave.---My Lord, it is the best Advice you can give him before the Storm grow too high. And no Subject is more concern'd in this than your Lordship. He sees he has not the Hearts of the People, and that it was a Faction only call'd him in, contrary to the Bent and Disposition of the Nation. What then can he expect but a Crown of Thorns, a miserable Life, and perhaps a fatal End? He may retreat with Honour, and doing Justice to the Injur'd, he may make himself a Blessing to *Britain*, by restoring her to her Constitution, Peace and Settlement; and secure the Friendship of a Prince in whose Power it may be to return Good or Evil Offices. Persuade him to begin with giving the Queen her Joynture, which is strictly due by Law, and cannot be detain'd but by manifest Injustice. Lay before him the Sin of oppressing the Fatherless and Widow; and repeat out of your Sermon, *Pitying the Miserable, and relieving the Poor according to their Necessities, and our own Abundance*. And much more giving them what is their Due, *Doing to all others, what we would have others do to us*. This is an eternal Rule by which you and he, and all will be judg'd. Believe you this? Then remember that the Case of *James III.* is many ways different from that of *James II.* You having nothing against this Prince but what would unhinge the World; that is, to exclude Kings for their Religion, and is a Principle you dare not stand by. You told the late King *James* (as you say in your Speech before the House of Lords) that he was not to trust to your Principle of *Passive Obedience*, for you had a Distinction in your Sleeve. Have you a Distinction ready for this Principle too, of making Religion a Barr to Government? This would dissolve all Governments where the Sovereigns and the Subjects are of different Sentiments in Religion. Will you say, except *Great Britain*? Or except *Papery*? I doubt you will find among them the best Friends you have as to this Principle. I know no other *Gallians*, who make Religion a Barr to Government.

I believe your Lordship remembers very well the Expedient which King *Charles II.* propos'd in Lieu of the Bill of Exclusion of Limitations upon a Popish Successor. Here is one who has voluntarily limited himself (as aforesaid) and will pass the same into a Law, if the Parliament desires it, or any other they can devise, for the Security of their Church and Religion, because he is fully determin'd to attack neither, as thinking them his own greatest Security, for the Reasons told above. If you say that Limitations are no Security against a Prince upon the Throne, you should add, with an Army of his own, who are not *Britains*, and a *Dutch Alliance*, with an Arbitrary Disposition. Interpret not this, I pray you, to your new Master, lest he make short Work with the Limitations put upon him, wherein you think your selves so secure. And wou'd you not be more safe under your own natural King? Who, as he has it not in his Disposition, so would it be no ways in his Power, to break through the Laws, and set up for Arbitrary. Do you believe he would attempt to bring in Popery with a Protestant Army? And he could have none other. If the Expedient had been accepted instead of the Exclusion, the Ministers of the late King *James* could have no Handle, Pretence, or Power to have set forward those Steps which prov'd so fatal to himself and his People; but the Fury of the Whiggs at that time thinking their Game sure, would have nothing less than the Exclusion: They would not stoop to Limitations, and so they lost both, and have been the Cause of all the Miseries that have follow'd. Imitate not the Pride and Hardness of their Hearts, lest a worse thing befall you. Remember the Parable of *Jotham*, that God sent an evil Spirit between *Abimelech* and the Men of *Shechem*, and the House of *Millo* (which was their Senate-House) and made Fire come out of the one to devour the other. Now therefore if you have dealt truly and sincerely with the House of the *Stuarts*, a Race of mild and gentle Princes, under whom ye liv'd rich and happy, the Envy of all Nations, except when the Whiggs disturb'd you with their Rebellions, and under the last of whom that sat upon the Throne, your Victories extended farther than ever before, and made *Great Britain* uncontestably the Umpire of *Europe*; and she had done greater things than these, had not the Sins of the Nation hasten'd her Death, for which the Whiggs triumph, and all honest Men lament: And there is but one more of that Royal Name left (who have sway'd the Scepter by hereditary Succession 314 Years) to whom ye can make Reparation for all the Injuries done to the Family. *Agree with thine Adversary quickly whilst thou art in the Way with him, lest the Great Judge cast thee into Prison, whence thou shalt not come out, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing*. I say, If ye have done justly with this Royal Family, in making *Hanover* King, then rejoyce in *Hanover*, and let *Hanover* rejoyce in you: But if not----

The Whiggs gape for a Common-wealth; therefore have weaken'd the Monarchy, and all the rest of the Nation pant after their old Constitution. What Friends then has *Hanover* left? And why will ye not hearken to the Voices of the People? Are they not the Voice of God? Free Voices, unsolicited, and with the Hazard of their Lives; not like Addresses, made Matters of Form, where other Mens Words are impos'd, and nothing but thanks return'd. This shews not the Heart, like Danger, which cannot hinder it when full, to boil over. And where there is so much Smoke, there must be some Fire, which may be stifl'd for a while, but will break out with more Violence, when the least Wind blows. I have said. And cannot

take Leave more properly than in your Lordship's own Words, in your Speech before the House of Lords, which you have printed, where p. 2. you express your self very pathetically in these Words.

If I could see that I had gone out of the Way in that (the Revolution) I should hold my self unworthy to appear longer, either in this Habit, or in this great Assembly; but would think my self bound to pass away the rest of my Life in Retirement, or Sorrow. There is nothing more certain in Religion, than that we ought to repent of every Sin we have committed; and that we cannot truly repent, unless we repair and restore, as far as is in our Power.

Now, my Lord, the Point at present is, *Whether a Prince ought to be excluded, merely on Account of his Religion?* And if you resolve it in the Negative, then you must confess, that *you have gone out of the Way*: If in the Affirmative, then you are oblig'd to give your Reasons for it, to convince others; and till then, not to think them *Obstinate, Peevish, or Superstitious*, because they cannot come into your new Measures. I think no Christian can hold this Principle; and therefore, that you will never undertake it; but if you do, I hope you will use some other Arguments, than calling Men Enemies to the Government, and hunting them into Prisons, &c. This is not *instructing those that oppose themselves in a Spirit of Love*, as you say excellently in your Sermon, p. 27.

Think not this unworthy an Answer, because of the Hand it comes from. I would not involve you in criminal Correspondence, and I had no other Way to come at you, and your Return in the same manner will be most acceptable to me. The Revolution, and your Master's Interest require it of you; your own Character, but much more the Account you are soon to give.

I have reduc'd the Matter to one single Point; that of Religion; and if that will not do, find another Objection if you can against King James III.

And since this is all the Prejudice (for Law or Reason there is none) against him, ought we not to lay aside Prejudices, in Obedience to the Law of God and Man, and the Lawful Oaths we and our Forefathers have taken? By all which we are oblig'd in the first Place to do Justice, and restore his Right to him; and then using all lawful Means, to leave the rest to Providence, which will govern, whether we will or not. If you say, you trust to it in the Way you go on; I answer, It is not trusting, but tempting God, unless you make out the Justice and Legality of your Ways: And offering Prayers to him, to prosper your Wickedness, is adding Blasphemy to Rebellion, and is downright *Atheism*. It would be suspecting our own Cause (having to do with a Man of good Understanding) to doubt of his Conversion, if he were upon the Throne, where with Safety and Honour he might hear what was to be said to him upon the Point of Religion, which he has promis'd to render his Enemies, without Excuse. But though he should never be converted, he would be no less our King, and it would be less in his Power to hurt our Church or our Religion. And we may expect the Blessing of God in the Observance of his Commandments, rather than in the open Breach and Contempt of them: And because we have succeeded for a while, to go on with a stiff Neck, and resolve never to return. This, my Lord, you cannot, you will not deny to be your Case, if you prove not clearly that God has made Diversity of Religion a Barr to Government. And forget not the Case of the Jews, in Egypt, in Babylon, and under the Romans.

When you have done this, you shall be my *Magnus Apollo*, and ever remembered with the utmost Gratitude and Esteem, by

CHAR. LESLIE.

New---year---day, 1715.

We to the Rebellious Children, saith the Lord, that take Counsel, but not of me! and that cover with a Covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add Sin to Sin, Isai. 30. 1.

They have set up Kings, but not by me; they have made Princes, and I knew it not, Hof. 8. 4.

Behold, all ye that kindle a Fire, that compass your selves about with Sparks; walk in the Light of your Fire, and in the Sparks that ye have kind'd. This shall you have of mine Hand, ye shall lie down in Sorrow, Isai. 50. 11.

Thou art wearied in the Greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, there is no Hope: Thou hast found the Life of thine Hand, therefore thou wast not grieved, Isai. 57. 10.

Because of Swearing the Land mourneth, Jer. 23. 10.

Because Sentence against an evil Work is not executed speedily, therefore the Heart of the Sons of Men is fully set in them to do Evil, Eccles. 8. 11.